

FORM PTO-1390
(REV 10-97)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

DATE: December 22, 2000

EXPRESS MAIL LABEL NO.
EM240913046USATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
34897/WWM09/720286
U.S. APPLICATION NO.**TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES
DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US)
CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371**INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO
PCT/US99/14401INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE
26 June 1999 (26.06.99)PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED
26 June 1998 (26.06.98)TITLE OF INVENTION
TERMINAL POWERED ON FOR EPG DOWNLOADAPPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US
MACRAE, Douglas B. and O'CONNOR, Daniel C.

Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

1. ☒ This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☒ This is an express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(1).
4. ☒ A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from the earliest claimed priority date
5. ☒ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2))
 - a. ☐ is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ has been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☒ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/LUS).
6. ☐ A translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).
7. ☐ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).
 - a. ☐ are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ have been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
 - d. ☐ have not been made and will not be made.
8. ☐ A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).
9. ☒ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)). **(unexecuted)**
10. ☐ A translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).

Items below concern other document(s) or other information included:

11. ☐ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
12. ☐ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
13. ☐ A FIRST preliminary amendment.
☐ A SECOND or SUBSEQUENT preliminary amendment.
14. ☐ A substitute specification
15. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
16. ☐ SMALL ENTITY Assertion: Applicant(s) and any others associated with it/them under 37 CFR § 1.27(a) are a small entity
17. ☒ International search report.
18. ☒ International preliminary examination report.
19. ☐
20. ☐
21. ☐

U.S. APPLICATION NO. 09/720286 (if known, see 37 CFR 1.5)		INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO PCT/US99/14401		ATTORNEY DOCKET NO 34897/WWM	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following fees are submitted: (see Note (1) below) Basic National Fee (37 CFR 1.492(a)(1)-(5)): Search Report has been prepared by the EPO or JPO \$860.00 International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) . . . \$690.00 No international preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) but international search fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) \$710.00 Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO \$1,000.00 International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(2)-(4) \$100.00 ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =				CALCULATIONS	PTO USE ONLY
Surcharge of \$130 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).				\$	
Claims	Number Filed	Number Extra	Rate		
Total Claims	2 -20=	0	X \$18	\$	0
Independent Claims	1 -3=	0	X \$80	\$	0
Multiple dependent claim(s) (if applicable)			+ \$270	\$	
TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =				\$	100
Reduction by 1/2 for filing by small entity, if applicable. Verified Small entity statement must also be filed. (Note 37 CFR 1.9, 1.27, 1.28).				\$	
SUBTOTAL =				\$	100
Processing fee of \$130 for furnishing the English translation later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)).				\$	
TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =				\$	100
Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 per property				\$	
TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =				\$	100
Note (1): The basic national fee must be paid when filing this application. The 20-month time limit (37 CFR § 1.494) and 30-month time limit (37 CFR § 1.495) are not extendable.				Amount to be: refunded	\$
				charged	\$
a. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A check in the amount of \$ 100 to cover the above fees is enclosed. b. <input type="checkbox"/> Please charge my Deposit Account No. _____ in the amount of \$ _____ to cover the above fees. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed. c. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 03-1728 . A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.					
NOTE (2): Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.					
SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Wesley W. Monroe CHRISTIE, PARKER & HALE P.O. Box 7068 Pasadena, CA 91109-7068 CUSTOMER NUMBER: 23363 </div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: right;"> By Wesley W. Monroe Reg. No. 20,958 </div> </div>					

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TERMINAL POWERED ON FOR EPG DOWNLOAD

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

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This application claims priority of U. S. provisional application 60/090.805, filed on June 26, 1998, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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This invention relates to the field of television and, more particularly, to a system for the intermittent transmission of data for use in displaying television program guide information or other data.

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Television program schedule systems, such as the one disclosed in application Serial No. 08/475.395, receive data transmitted in the vertical blanking interval (VBI) of a TV channel. Typically, the TV receiver must be powered on and tuned to the proper channel for the data to be received by the schedule system. Since transmissions occur during the middle of the day and night, when viewers are not as likely to be watching television, users must leave the system powered on to be sure they receive new data. This method wastes energy and is expensive for the user.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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According to the invention, television program data is intermittently downloaded to a plurality of user terminals equipped with a data receiver, a memory for storing television program data, an on-screen electronic program guide generator, a microprocessor, and a television monitor for displaying television programs and an electronic program guide. The data receivers are normally powered off and powered on at regular intervals to receive transmitted program data. The transmitted program data is stored in the memory. The microprocessor is configured to transfer television program data from the memory to the generator in response to user commands and to control the generator to generate a video drive signal representative of an on-screen television program guide. The drive signal is coupled to the generator to the monitor to display the on-screen program guide. Various regimes are employed to turn the tuner on and off.

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A feature of the invention is to transmit time correction packets with EPG data so real time clocks in all the user terminals can be synchronized to turn on at the same time for receipt of EPG data.

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Another feature of the invention is to transmit instruction packets with the EPG data. One such instruction is to turn the tuner on a designated time to a designated channel. This allows for flexibility in the time and channel of the transmission of the EPG data.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The features of specific embodiments of the best mode contemplated of carrying out the invention are illustrated in the drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a diagram of the communications network employed in the transmission of data.

FIG. 2 is system block diagram of a television program guide integrated with typical TV related devices.

FIG. 3 is an illustration of a data transmission packet.

FIG. 4 is an illustration of the header of a data transmission packet in FIG. 3.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

In the following embodiments of the invention, reference numerals are used to represent components. If the features of all the embodiments are incorporated into a single system, these components can be shared and perform all the functions of the described embodiments.

Data Transmission

As is seen in figure 1, television schedule data from the master database 51 and master time data from the master clock 50 are sent to carrier channels via a communications circuit 52. Each carrier channel (public television, CNN, NBC, etc.) then transmits the data in the vertical blanking interval (VBI) of their specific broadcast channel. Each carrier channel has a distribution infrastructure in place for their channel, typically consisting of a satellite uplink 53 and a satellite network. The channels are then received by local affiliates and/or local cable companies 55 and telecast 56 to the user's equipment 57, 58 & 59.

In order to receive schedule data the television receiver must be turned on and tuned to the data provider channel. For example, if the data provider channel is channel 7, the television must first be tuned to channel 7 before schedule data can be received.

In one embodiment, data is transmitted during the first five minutes of each hour. If the user is not watching TV at this time, the terminal will signal the tuner (figure 2, item 11) to power on and tune to the proper channel. If the user is watching a different channel when the schedule system attempts to download data, or changes channels during the download, the download is skipped. The data transmitted each hour includes instructions to the terminal, targeted data using a filter and database updates. The downloads are spaced one hour apart over a 24-hour period to provide a high probability that during one of those attempts a user will not have the television tuned to another channel. It is unlikely that someone will be watching television at all twenty four of these data downloading intervals.

In an alternate embodiment several additional features could be incorporated, such as: Schedule data updates can occur on an individual basis for each channel. A warning message can be displayed on the screen of the tv monitor after some number of downloads are skipped,

1 informing the user that data may not be available until a download is completed. Each channel
provider can supply schedule updates in the VBI signal for that channel. When the user selects
a channel for display the schedule system can interrogate the VBI on that channel and receive
schedule updates. The database can also be revision controlled, allowing terminals to receive
5 incremental updates of data as needed.

The receiver turn on and turn off times and the channel on which the data is transmitted
are stored in ROM: the microprocessor is programmed to process downloaded EPG data, data
updates, and instructions, to compare the stored turn on and turn off times with a real time clock,
to turn the tuner on or off when the comparison detects a match, and to filter the data that is
10 stored in the program schedule memory

FIG. 3 illustrates a download packet used for the transmission of system data. The packet
begins with a packet header 60 containing a packet ID number used to distinguish this packet
from other packets. The packet header also contains the number of bytes in the packet and a
CRC check bit for error detection.

15 The packet header is followed by the payload data 61. The payload data contains the
information being transmitted to the terminal. In addition to program data (i.e. the database of
programming information), various other types of information are contained within the payload
data, including: System commands instructions, filters, and time synchronization information.

The packet payload data is followed by the end of packet message 62. This field indicates
20 to the system that the end of the packet has been reached.

After receiving a packet the system checks the CRC to detects any transmission errors,
and then extracts the payload data for procession. In the current embodiment the system only
receives packets - it has no method of transmitting information. Therefore, any lost or corrupt
packets are not resent to the terminal and that data is lost.

25 In an alternate embodiment, designed to operate with digital television data packets are
transmit in a digital data stream with a digital television signal to the terminals.

System Overview

FIG. 2 describes a system block diagram of a television program guide 40 integrated with
30 typical TV related devices. The primary input source of television signals 10, such as a
terrestrial antenna or a cable, is connected to a television tuner 11. The output of tuner 11 is a
modulated intermediate frequency signal containing video and audio television information.
Tuner 11 is connected by an intermediate frequency amplifier (IF AMP) 12 to a picture detector
(PICTURE DET) 13, a sound detector (SOUND DET) 14, and VBI detector (VBI DET) 24
35 which produce base band video, audio signals and transmitted program data, respectively. The
audio signal is coupled by a sound amplifier (SOUND AMP) 15 to a loudspeaker 16. The video
signal is coupled by a video amplifier not shown to one input of a switch 18. The VBI signal is
coupled to the television program guide microprocessor (μ P) 24. The microprocessor is

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1 adjusts the time to local time by performing the subtraction. Any propagation delay of the time packet is known and would be within the transmission system's tolerance.

Instructions

5 Instructions tell the terminal to perform a particular task. In the present embodiment instructions include: go back to sleep - if there is no new data to receive, change to another channel - to receive further instructions and/or data, to wake up at a different time, to receive new data on this channel now, or execute a filter or set of filters.

10 Filters

A filter is a set of conditions that are matched, or not matched, based on information stored within each terminal. Conditions could include: The terminal's software version, the zip code where the terminal is located, or even areas of viewer interest (i.e., sports, movies, news, etc). If a filter is matched, then the terminal performs an instruction or selectively grabs data.
15 Filters are used to limit the terminals that perform a specific instruction or grab selected data to fewer than all the television receivers to which the television signals are sent..

Data

20 Data is information about programs that air on television. Such data typically includes the channel, time, day, length and specific content of a television program. This data is then stored and sorted to provide the user pertinent information about the programs that air on his television.

25 The following is one example of how the television receiver can be turned on and off to download data during data transmission sessions assuming that the default data channel for this example is set to channel 17:

24:59 pst The microprocessor 24 checks to see if tuner 11 is on and tuned to channel 17. If not, it sends a command to the tuner to power on and tune to channel 17. If tuner
30 11 is already turned on to channel 17 because the television receiver is currently in use, it remains on to receive data. If tuner 11 is already turned on to a different channel because the television receiver is currently in use, the download is skipped and the microprocessor sequences a counter to indicate the skipped download. (When the counter reaches a prescribed number, the microprocessor causes the
35 warning message to be displayed on the monitor.)

00:01 pst Tuner 11 being turned on, VBI detector 34 receives a time packet and forwards it to the microprocessor. The microprocessor first sends a command to tuner 11 to

- 1 power off, then checks the local clock 36, and compares it with the time in the packet. If there is a difference, the microprocessor adjusts the local clock.
- 5 00:02 pst Tuner 11 turns back on and the VBI detector receives a filter and instruction packet. The filter is set such that all terminals with zip codes >92800 should tune to channel 29 at 07:35 UT for new data. The instruction packet is forwarded to the microprocessor.
- 10 00:03 pst Responsive to the instruction packet, the microprocessor sends a command to tuner 11 to power off. Assuming that the terminal's zip code is set as 92855, the microprocessor also schedules the data download responsive to the instruction packet..
- 15 00:35 pst The microprocessor checks to see if tuner 11 is on and tuned to channel 29. If not, it sends a command to the tuner to power on and tune to channel 29. If tuner 11 is already turned on to channel 29 because the television receiver is currently in use, it remains on to receive data. If tuner 11 is already turned on to a different channel because the television receiver is currently in use, the download is skipped and the microprocessor sequences the counter to indicate the skipped download. (When the counter reaches a prescribed number, the microprocessor causes the warning message to be displayed on the monitor.)
- 20 00:36 pst The VBI detector receives data packets and forwards them to the microprocessor. Once the last packet is received, the microprocessor sends a command to the tuner to power off.
- 25 00:59 pst The described process is repeated at this time and at the same time every hour thereafter.
- 30 It should be noted that if no filter is used, tuner 11 starts to receive downloaded data when it is turned back on at 00:02 pst responsive to the instruction packet .

35 The following is another example of how the television receiver can be turned on and off to download data during data transmission sessions: The instruction packets are transmitted at regular or irregular intervals that are not known to tuner 11. Tuner 11 is periodically turned on for a time period, T^1 , that is longer than the time period, T^2 , required to receive an instruction packet. For example if an instruction packet last two seconds, e.g., $T^1 = 2 \text{ sec.}$, tuner 11 might be turned on for a time period of 60 seconds, e.g., $T^2 = 60 \text{ sec.}$, so it is likely that an instruction

1 packet, if transmitted, overlaps with the time that tuner 11 is turned on. As in the other example,
when an instruction packet is received, it is stored and the microprocessor turns on to the
designated channel at the designated time to receive the data download. To insure that an
instruction packet is received before the EPG data stored in the terminal becomes obsolete or
5 stale, the microprocessor is programmed to shorten successively periods between tuner turn ons
until an instruction packet is received. For example, right after reception of an instruction
packet, the period between tuner turn ons could be one hour and thereafter could be shortened
by five minutes until the next instruction packet is received; thereafter the period between tuner
turn ons could be return to one hour and the cycle could be repeated.

10 The described embodiments of the invention are only considered to be preferred and
illustrative of the inventive concept: the scope of the invention is not to be restricted to such
embodiment. Various and numerous other arrangements may be devised by one skilled in the
art without departing from the spirit and scope of this invention. For example, other regimes
could be employed to turn the tuner on and off to reduce power consumption without loss of EPG
15 data. Further, although it is currently preferred to transmit the EPG data with the television
signal on a television channel, the EPG data could be transmitted over another data link, such
as for example a 930 Mz pager channel. In any case, the data receiver is turned on and off as
described above to reduce power consumption.

1 WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for intermittently downloading television program data to a plurality of user terminals equipped with a data receiver, a memory for storing television program data, an
5 on-screen electronic program guide generator, a microprocessor, and a television monitor for displaying television programs and an electronic program guide, the method comprising the steps of:

normally powering the data receivers off;
intermittently transmitting television program data to the user terminals;
10 powering the data receivers on to intercept the transmitted program data;
storing the transmitted program data in the memory;
programming the microprocessor to transfer television program data from the memory to the generator in response to user commands;
programming the microprocessor to control the generator to generate a video drive
15 signal representative of an on-screen television program guide; and
coupling the generator to the monitor to display the on-screen program guide.

2. The method of claim 1, in which the data receiver comprises a television tuner and VBI decoder and the transmitting step comprises embedding the program data in a television
20 signal received by the tuner.

FIG. 1

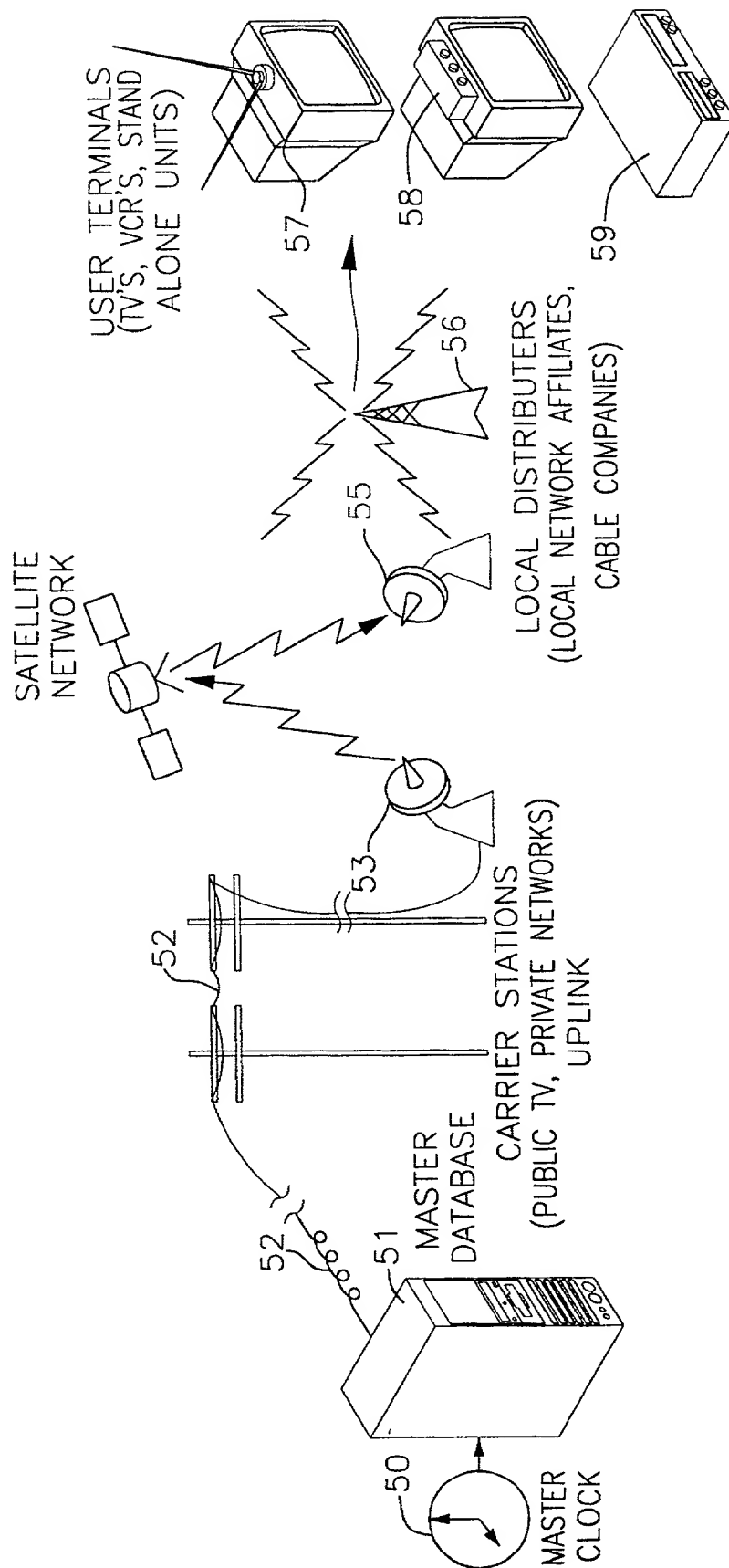


FIG. 2

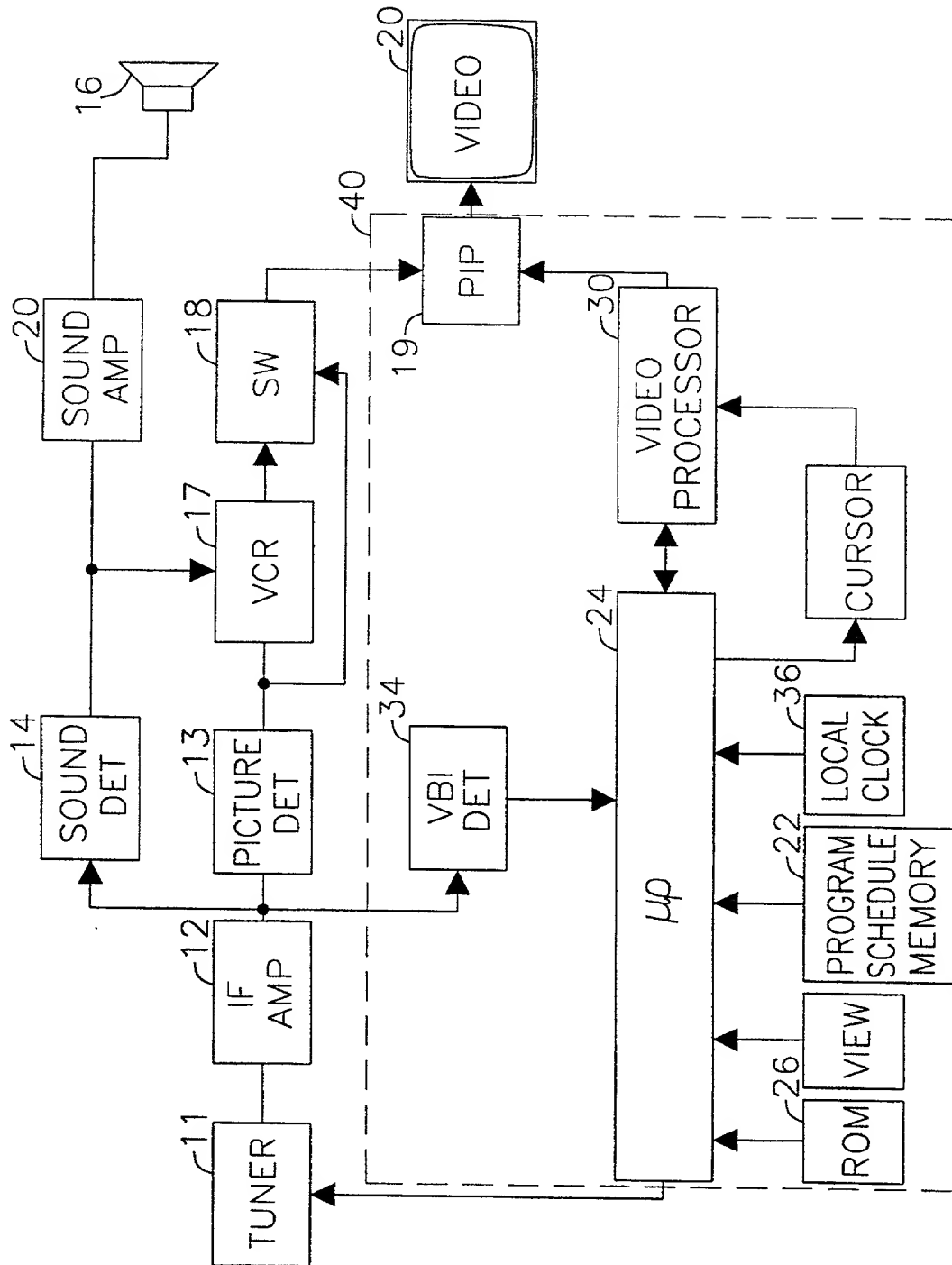


FIG. 3

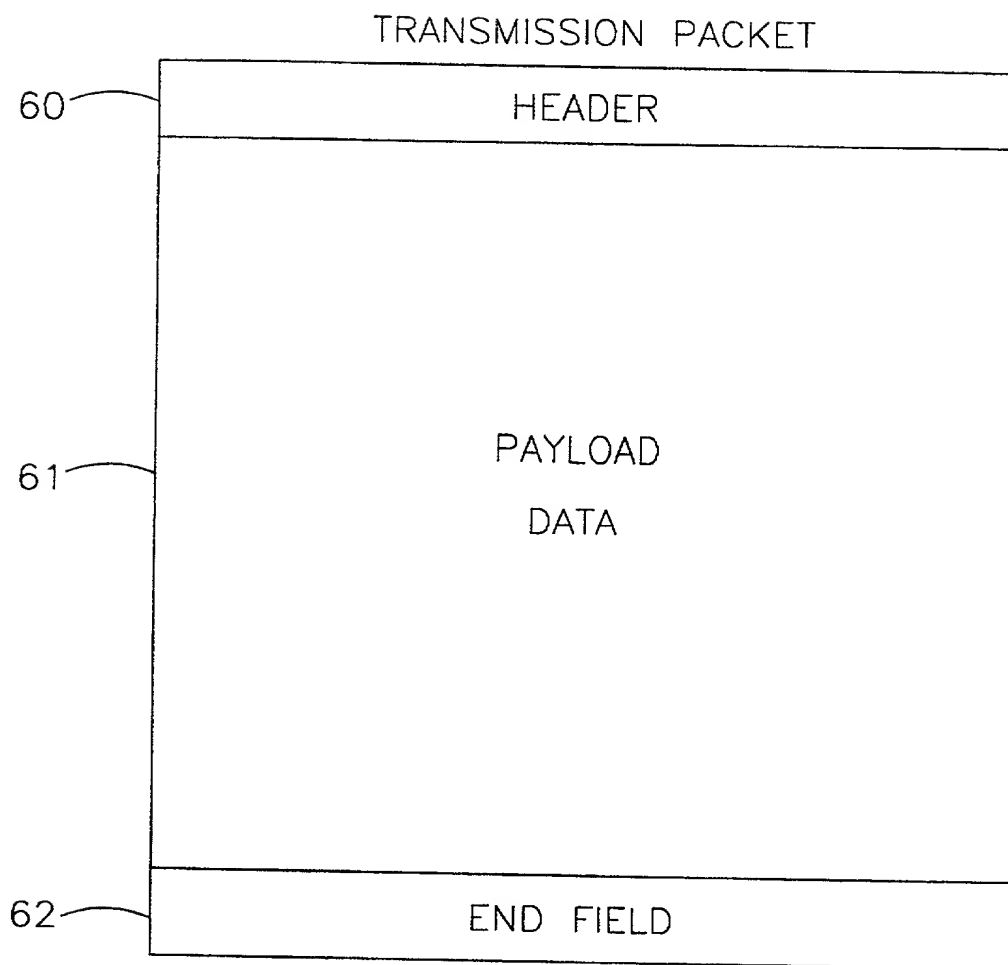


FIG. 4

TRANSMISSION PACKET HEADER

ID	NUMBER OF BYTES	CRC
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**DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY
FOR PATENT APPLICATIONS**

PATENT

Docket No. : 34897/WWM/I148

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled **TERMINAL POWERED ON FOR EPG DOWNLOAD**, the specification of which is attached hereto unless the following is checked:

 x was filed on June 26, 1999 as PCT International Application Number PCT/US99/14401

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR § 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or § 365(b) of the foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or § 365(a) of any PCT International application which designated at least one country other than the United States, listed below and have also identified below, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or PCT International application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Prior Foreign Application(s)

<u>Application Number</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Filing Date (day/month/year)</u>	<u>Priority Claimed</u>
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I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

<u>Application Number</u>	<u>Filing Date</u>
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60/090,805	June 26, 1998
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I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 120 of any United States application(s), or any PCT International application designating the United States, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR § 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT International filing date of this application:

<u>Application Number</u>	<u>Filing Date</u>	<u>Patented/Pending/Abandoned</u>
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POWER OF ATTORNEY: I hereby appoint the following attorneys and agents of the law firm CHRISTIE, PARKER & HALE, LLP to prosecute this application and any international application under the Patent Cooperation Treaty based on it and to transact all business in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office connected with either of them in accordance with instructions from the assignee of the entire interest in this application; or from the first or sole inventor named below in the event the application is not assigned; or from in the event the power granted herein is for an application filed on behalf of a foreign attorney or agent.

**DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY
FOR PATENT APPLICATIONS**

Docket No. 34897/WWM/I148

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The authority under this Power of Attorney of each person named above shall automatically terminate and be revoked upon such person ceasing to be a member or associate of or of counsel to that law firm.

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**SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO : CHRISTIE, PARKER & HALE, LLP
P.O. Box 7068, Pasadena, CA 91109-7068**

I declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full name of sole or first joint inventor Douglas B. Macrae	Inventor's signature <i>[Signature]</i>	Date 1/9/01
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Full name of second joint inventor Daniel C. O'Connor	Inventor's signature <i>[Signature]</i>	Date 1.9.01
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